

VZCZCXRO9643  
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEHKI #0640/01 1871435  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 061435Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9860  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000640

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - JULY 6

¶1. (U) The information contained in this cable consists principally of spot reports from various sources. This cable is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

#### Anti-LRA Operations

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¶2. (SBU) The FARDC attacked LRA positions at Duma on June 30, killing two rebels and at Lema on July 1, capturing one LRA combatant. According to MONUC, the UPDF and FARDC assess that Kony is in the CAR, but that many of his officers remain in the DRC near the CAR border.

#### UNICEF Views on the LRA

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¶3. (SBU) A UNICEF contact responsible for child protection in the eastern DRC recently provided us with a summary of recent UNICEF actions that the organization believes are helping to put more emphasis on protection and response in Province Orientale. UNICEF, its Italian NGO partner COOPI, and seven Congolese NGOs have implemented an early warning system to highlight suspected LRA positions. UNICEF and its partners advise villagers to move in groups, also pointing out safe areas to which the villagers can flee. UNICEF noted that the emergence of self-defense units has deterred LRA attacks in certain instances.

¶4. (SBU) According to our contact, the LRA is now focused on survival, attacking for food, rather than for strategic or retributive goals. The group lacks ammunition and guns, and constant movement complicates resupply efforts. Since January, UNICEF estimates that the LRA has abducted some 600 children and young adults, but around 307 have escaped. Based on abductee debriefings, UNICEF believes the LRA seeks to recruit a new batch of fighters, then move to the CAR to recover and train.

#### Security Situation in the Kivus

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¶5. (SBU) Radio Okapi reported an FDLR attack on Kasheghe in North Kivu on the night of June 29-30 resulted in three FARDC and 8 FDLR killed. MONUC confirmed that a joint FDLR/PARECO force carried out the attack (see paragraph 12). GDRC Spokesman Lambert Mende condemned the attack, which occurred on the DRC's Independence Day, as "a terrorist act intending to demoralize the Congolese population." Opposition politicians, while condemning the attack, claimed that the attack highlighted two failures: the inability of the joint operations to neutralize the FDLR; and the lack of military reform.

¶6. (SBU) MONUC confirmed that around 25 houses were burned in Kesheguru, 22 kilometers north of Kiwanja. It is unclear how the fires started, although there was reportedly heavy exchange of fire between FARDC and FDLR in the area. Two FARDC were reportedly

killed. Some locals maintained that the FARDC had set the fires.  
(Comment: this area around Nyalima remains tense with frequent FARDC-FDLR clashes, with the local population caught in the middle.  
End comment.)

¶17. (U) Radio Okapi reported that unidentified men in uniforms killed a pastor in his house, as well as two guests, in Rutshuru the night of July 4-5. The perpetrators apparently did not take anything from the house. The same night at Kinyandonyi (10 kilometers from Rutshuru), an exchange of fire between the national police (PNC) and FDLR/Mai Mai forces left one PNC officer dead.

¶18. (SBU) A previously unknown Mai Mai group evoked panic in Rutshuru by distributing leaflets calling on all Nande to depart the area by June 30. MONUC has stepped up patrols to protect the Nande population. We subsequently followed up to ascertain that the threat was empty, but ethnic tensions remain high.

¶19. (SBU) An independent researcher, with good FDLR contacts, has informed us that collaboration between the FARDC and FDLR has decreased significantly over the past few months. It is now the exception, not the rule.

¶110. (SBU) Money to pay the April and May salaries of FARDC troops in South Kivu has arrived in Bukavu. Troops in Goma were paid prior to President Kabila's June 30 visit to the city.

#### PARECO-Nande Collaboration with the FDLR

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¶11. (SBU) According to Nande contacts, PARECO-Nande military leader

KINSHASA 00000640 002 OF 002

"General" Lafontaine refused to meet with Chief of Defense Didier Etumba, when the CHOD recently met with non-Rwandophone armed groups in Goma. Lafontaine reportedly insisted on meeting only with President Kabila.

¶12. (SBU) MONUC reported that a captured FDLR combatant claimed that LaFontaine's units were involved in the attack on Kashege, and that PARECO-Nande is systematically collaborating with the FDLR.  
(Comment: this information is consistent with previous reports that indicated LaFontaine was considering a military option. While LaFontaine may still try to hedge his bets, it looks increasingly as if he has chosen to side with the FDLR. It is uncertain how much support he can muster within the Nande community for this approach.  
End comment.)

#### Humanitarian Situation

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¶13. (U) Press reports indicate that as many as 4,000 IDP households have fled FARDC-FDLR fighting in the areas of Miriki, Luofu, Kitalo, and Buakinge in southern Lubero District. The German NGO Diakonie has provided 300 tons of foodstuffs and non-food items, including beans, rice, salt, blankets, mosquito nets, hoes, and jerry cans.

¶14. (SBU) WFP estimates that there are currently 20,000 IDPs on the Hombo-Bunyakiri axis in South Kivu. There are no IDP camps on the axis. WFP will supply three megatons of rations and MONUC stands ready to assist "in any way necessary."

GARVELINK